



# City of Santa Barbara

## Planning Division

### ARCHITECTURAL BOARD OF REVIEW CASE SUMMARY

535 E. MONTECITO STREET

MST2004-00235

---

**4/19/04**

(COMMENTS ONLY; PROJECT REQUIRES ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT, PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL FOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN APPROVAL AND MODIFICATIONS.)

(6:31)

Rob Pearson, Santa Barbara Housing Authority, Detlev Peikert, Architect, John Campanella, agent, and Trish Allen, Associate Planner, present.

Staff comment: Ms. Allen stated that the initiation action for the zone change will commence in early May at the City Council. The Planning Commission will review the project under concept review. The Board's comments from this review will be forwarded to both the City Council and the Planning Commission.

Motion: Continued indefinitely to the Planning Commission with the following comments: 1) The Board appreciates the project's intent to address the City's housing issue and respects the project's economics. 2) Although concerned with the size and visual massing of this particular solution, a sizable project could be supportable and appropriate in this neighborhood. 3) The Board is concerned that the four-story massing is being brought out to the street. 4) Study ways to open, break, and relieve the mass against the streets. 5) The project significantly departs from the mass and scale that the Board customarily finds acceptable; therefore, the Board seeks direction from the Planning Commission and/or the City Council on the review of the project.

Action: Larson/Bartlett, 6/0/0.

---

**6/28/04**

Proposal for a mixed-use subdivision development in a four-story stepped structure on a 1.79-acre lot, containing 89 affordable ownership residential units (1 one-bedroom, 58 two-bedroom, and 30 three-bedroom, for sale to workforce households), about 8,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space, public and private open space areas, and about 146 off-street parking spaces.]

(SECOND CONCEPT REVIEW.)

(COMMENTS ONLY; PROJECT REQUIRES ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT, PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL FOR TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION AND MODIFICATIONS AND CITY COUNCIL ADOPTION OF SPECIFIC PLAN.)

(4:26)

Rob Pearson, City Housing Authority; Detlev Peikert, Architect; Andrew Bermant, Bermant Development Company; John Campanella, Bermant Homes; and Trish Allen, Associate Planner, present.

Staff Comment: Ms. Allen stated that in May 2004 the City Council, as well as the Planning Commission, reviewed this project and stated concerns about the project's mass, bulk and scale. The architect has since responded to the concerns and has made adjustments to the proposal. The purpose of today's review is for the Board to determine whether this is the right approach for this project on this site in regard to mass, density and design.

Public comment opened at 4:52 p.m.

Naomi Kovacs, Executive Director of Citizens Planning Association, was concerned with the project's mass, bulk and scale and its inconsistency with the surrounding area. The proposal has inadequate setbacks, lack of landscape and vertical variation. She also had a concern with the proposed parking.

Public comment closed at 4:56 p.m.

During the discussion, the Board members either individually or collectively commented:

1. Felt that the commercial area on the corner of Montecito and Calle Cesar Chavez should be pedestrian friendly and inviting.
2. Felt that the articulation of the architecture and massing are going in the right direction. Felt that the use of color should not be used to substitute architecture and the colors used should be subtle.
3. Felt that the project is appropriate for the area and is ideally sited.
4. Felt that the inner court yard could be maintained.
5. One member did not support the reduction in massing if that would result in the reduction of units. Noted that design guidelines should be flexible with this project, due to its uniqueness.
6. Some Board members felt that the project was not moving in the right direction. Felt that the consistent on-mass move creates a sense of significant streetscape. Suggested significantly stepping back some of the architecture along the streetscape while maintaining the significant interior private outdoor space and breaking up the massing.
7. Supported the carving out of the street corner adjacent to Casa De La Raza and suggested deferring that corner as much as possible to allow the tower of the Casa De La Raza to still be the prominent piece of architecture on that street corner.
8. Felt that the project had no distinction between its different facades. Felt that this project should appear as an assemblage of buildings rather than one building and should incorporate a hierarchy of fenestration proportions.
9. Suggested utilizing a raised grade at the corner plaza to provide more flexibility in the allowed heights for type-five construction and studying plate height variations.
10. Supported the mixed use of flat and tile roof throughout the project.
11. Supported the internal court yard but would like it to express itself more to the outside of the building. Felt that at least three planters should be placed at natural depth. Suggested reuse some of the canary island palm trees to see some foliage go through the top of the roofs.
12. Felt that the design may not be appropriate for families with children.
13. Felt that large trees should be planted against the building along Calle Cesar Chavez and Montecito Street.
14. Suggested utilizing approximately 25% the space on top of the building as roof-top gardens.
15. Suggested looking at the immediate neighboring buildings to compare building massing.
16. Felt that the towers at three of the four corners should be studied to move the vertical access more towards the center of the project to get some of the height into the center rather than at the corners.
17. Felt that the interior plaza will only benefit those living in the podium level and that there is no real public open space on any of the upper levels. Suggested shifting some of that space up to the third level and fourth level if possible.
18. Felt that the amount of landscape on the west side should be increased with the addition of some trees.
19. One member felt that the units' size should be reduced to achieve a better project. Applicant may want to consider additional two-story townhouse units.

Motion: Continued indefinitely with the various comments stated above and the following: The Board's comments vary from general acceptance of the program and its need to the community to the need for significant reduction in mass, bulk and scale and further articulation of the architecture to create extreme breaks in the rhythm of the complex.

Action: Larson/LeCron, 7/0/0.

9/13/04

535 E MONTECITO ST M-1 Zone

Assessor's Parcel Number: 031-351-010

Application Number: MST2004-00235

Architect: Peikert Group Architects

Owner: Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara

Applicant: John Campanella

(Proposal for a four-story mixed-use development to include 60 two-bedroom units of approximately 1,150 square feet, 30 three-bedroom units of approximately 1,450 square feet, and 8,000 square feet of non-residential floor area. The project includes 146 parking spaces on a 1.79-acre lot. The residential units are proposed to be 100% affordable.)

(COMMENTS ONLY, PROJECT REQUIRES PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL FOR A SPECIFIC PLAN.)

(3:24)

Detliev Peikert, Architect; Gordon Brewer, Architect; John Campanella, Applicant; and Trish Allen, Project Planner; present.

Public comment opened at 3:45 p.m.

Louis Weider, of Olive Court, L.P., was concerned regarding the circulation of the project and impacts on traffic in the area. He stated that he would not want the project to use his easement for ingress and egress from the parking level.

Public comment closed at 3:50 p.m.

Motion: Continued indefinitely to the Planning Commission with the following comments on the project as designed: 1) A majority of the Board still has significant reservations regarding the size and bulk which is a direct result of the large program. The major aspects that the Board considers affecting the size and bulk are: The diagram layout, the central court yard, unit count, unit size and the uniform stacking of the units, all which are associated with keeping units affordable and reducing construction cost.

If the program is not reduced and the owners criteria is not changed, the following comments apply:

1) The applicant has done an admirable job with the building breakups and manipulation of the street front units to vary architecture solids and fenestration. 2) The Board appreciates the variation in architectural styles of the five building components. 3) Reduce the covered fourth story balconies which will aide in the reduction of the overall apparent height. 4) Study increasing the scale and reducing the number of the fenestration, column spacing and other façade elements, to reduce the apparent size.

If the program criteria was reduced the board would like to see the following: Site Plan: 1) The unit sizes and count should be reduced and varied to create greater setbacks and open spaces and landscape. 2) The west elevation is severe, and its setback needs to be greater. 3) Address the traffic circulation concerns regarding ingress and egress from the parking level through one vehicle exit adjacent to neighbor's property. 4) Several Board members felt that an entirely different layout diagram could achieve better massing by centralizing the project's bulk towards the center of the site, away from the street, and provide more variation to street elevations. Size Bulk and Scale: 1) The units should not be repetitiously stacked. 2) Smaller units should be placed on the third residential floor. 3) There should be tree wells which reach through the parking level to natural grade to allow for larger trees within the open courtyard space. 4) Reduce the openings in the parking level, especially along the west elevation. 5) Reduce the covered fourth story balconies which will aide in minimizing the overall apparent height. 6) Reduce the overall height and break up the buildings by varying the number of stories and height. 7) Study increasing the scale and reducing the number of the fenestration, column spacing and other façade elements, to reduce the apparent size. 8) Create additional open space by studying openings to pedestrians on the dominant streets, open pedestrian access to court level from street, open stairwells and roof decks.

Action: Bartlett/Christoff, 6/1/0. Lecron supported the project as submitted, and therefore was not able to support the motion.

---

9/25/06

CONCEPT REVIEW - NEW ITEM: PUBLIC HEARING

535 E MONTECITO ST                      M-1 Zone  
Assessor's Parcel Number:      031-351-010      Application Number:                      MST2006-00530  
Owner:                      Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara  
Architect:                      Peikert Group Architects, LLC

(This project has been revised since the last ABR hearing on September 13, 2004. The proposal is for the "Los Portales" development of 48 affordable residential condominium units on a 1.8 acre vacant lot. Each of the six three-story buildings would be 10,285 square feet consisting of four 2-bedroom units, four 3-bedroom units, and eight two-car garages for tandem parking. There would be 2,409 cubic yards of fill grading on the site. Planning Commission approval of a Tentative Subdivision Map and modification to provide less than the required amount of guest parking onsite and City Council approval of a Specific Plan are requested.)

(COMMENTS ONLY; PROJECT REQUIRES ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL FOR A MODIFICATION AND A TENTATIVE SUBDIVISION MAP AND CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL FOR A SPECIFIC PLAN.)

(3:38)

Present:Peikert, Architect; Lisa Plowman Architect; John Campanella, BDC; Bob Pierson, Santa Barbara Housing Authority. Victoria Green, Project Planner, City of Santa Barbara, was available to answer questions and provide clarification.

Public comment opened at 3:58 p.m.

Louis Weider, representative from Olive Court Partners, neighboring commercial property, in favor.

Public comment closed at 3:59 p.m

Motion:Continued indefinitely to the Planning Commission with the following comments:

1) The Board finds that the revised 48-unit proposal supportable as it contains smaller buildings, provides more usable ground level space, and has less overall mass than the previous proposal. 2) The Board is concerned with the apparent repetition of one building style with only slight variations. a. Study adding more variations to Buildings A and B. b. Study refining the end elevations along Calle Ceasar Chavez. c. Study adding more variety at building corners. d. Simplify the architectural forms through differentiated plate heights and simpler gable forms. 3) There is concern by some Board members that the stairwell entrances appear cave-like. Restudy and refine the human scale of the entrances. 4) As to the street entries: a. the Board is comfortable with the conceptual east elevation entry arcade element form, and b. looks for the south entry portal to be moved closer to street to allow more usable open space within the project. 5) As to the site planning: a. study partial usage of the access easement to the west to provide access to the first motor court, located between buildings 5 and 6, and b. to allow the central paseo (north to south) to connect to main paseo (east to west) thereby reducing the length of the motor-court between Montecito St. and the center buildings (bldgs 2 & 5). 6) Use significant trees, especially along the street elevations to mitigate the 3-story facades, and include more landscape, especially at the driveway motor-courts, even if a slight widening is needed for this to occur. 7) Off-set the opposing windows to alleviate privacy concerns and reduce sound. 8) If possible, provide some level of enhanced pavement at the motor-court, especially the shared motor-court, and to lesser extent the motor-court to the north. 9) Make the space between the south buildings wider with additional landscape.

Action:                      Wienke/LeCron, 7/0/0. Sherry absent.